

# Memorandum



**Date:** August 30, 2005

**To:** Honorable Carlos A. Alvarez, Mayor  
Honorable Chairperson Joe A. Martinez and Members,  
Board of County Commissioners

**From:** George M. Burgess  
County Manager

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "G. Burgess", written over the printed name of the County Manager.

**Subject:** Hurricane Katrina County Preparation & Response

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Last Thursday, August 25, 2005 Miami-Dade County was under a tropical storm warning south of Florida City and a hurricane warning for the southeast Florida coast. As such, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activated to a Level Two in preparation for Tropical Storm Katrina. During that evening, our community was impacted by the 80 mph winds and rain of what had become a category one hurricane. A local state of emergency was declared at 6:30 pm Thursday in anticipation of Katrina's landfall. The immediate valuable lesson for planning purposes is the need to listen to our forecasters and emergency planners when monitoring these systems. Mother Nature does not follow the "skinny black line." Miami-Dade County was in the cone of probability when Katrina diagonally cut through our County.

We are quite fortunate in the scheme of things. Miami-Dade County is prepared to assist the governments in the Gulf Coast area, as necessary. In fact, 34 search and rescue specialists with Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, accompanied by six (6) trained search dogs, left for the area last evening, August 29, on a search and rescue mission. However, in the aftermath of the storm here in the County, thousands in our community have suffered from damage or have been inconvenienced by the loss of power, landscape damage and other affects of this hurricane. I am proud to report to you that the County mobilized before and immediately thereafter to serve the public in our recovery efforts. I want to thank each of you for your support and cooperation in identifying the needs of the community. It is during these difficult times that the County family pulls together for each other and for the community. It is moments like this when we truly deliver excellence.

Over the last five (5) days, I have spent a considerable amount of time at the EOC and personally toured the impacted areas, as most of you have as well. The following is a summary of the County's preparation, response and assessment to date. I want to stress that all of the activity summarized below was completed in a four (4) day period, with many of our employees suffering from their own personal circumstances. I am extremely pleased with the dedication of many of our employees. We continue to work diligently to clear debris and restore Miami-Dade County to its pre-storm beauty.

The EOC has maintained a twenty-four hour operation for four (4) days, serving as the heart of pre and post recovery efforts. The public has been briefed regularly and the Miami-Dade 311 Answer Center has provided the public with valuable, up to date information, receiving over 38,000 since August 24. During Hurricane Katrina, County residents used the web portal extensively to get updates of available services. The day Katrina made landfall, more than 50,000 web visitors viewed 250,000 pages of information. Volunteers across County departmental lines have provided assistance and support to all efforts.

County offices were closed on Friday, August 26, and as of yesterday, all County services are operating at normal levels with the exception of some County parks and libraries. The EOC is operating at a Level Two, and a local State of Emergency remains in effect. Multiple County departments were deployed the morning after Hurricane Katrina to establish a base line level of damage assessment in order to prioritize service delivery.

At this time, a preliminary damage survey is complete. Reported public damage appears to approximate \$100,000,000. Agricultural losses approximate \$423,000,000. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state emergency management officials advised us on August 29 that Miami-Dade County has been designated by FEMA for federal disaster assistance. Currently, the President's disaster declaration includes funding for 100 percent of eligible costs for emergency protective measures and debris removal, at a minimum, for eligible local governments and certain not-for-profit organizations. The County has not yet been advised whether a declaration for individual assistance for Miami-Dade County residents will be granted

A FEMA Applicant Briefing for public assistance is scheduled for Thursday, September 8 at Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Headquarters, 9300 NW 41<sup>st</sup> Street. The briefing for municipalities and County departments will be held at 10:00 am and the private non-profit entity briefings will be at 1:30 pm.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Public Works Department (PWD) has cleared debris from public right-of-ways and is pending removal to disposal sites by the Department of Solid Waste Management (SWM). While inspections continue 100 percent of the category 1 arterial roadways have been cleared and 98 percent of collector and section line roads are completed. We are now focusing on those local roads with obstruction.

A large percentage of the County's 2,625 traffic signal locations were affected. As of this morning, 298 continue without power and 43 are on flash mode. Restoration of traffic signals continues as Florida Power & Light (FPL) restores electrical power. Repairs have been made to 330 stop signs and 60 still require repair. Crews continue to restore damaged equipment. Approximately 1,200 trees are down in the medians and will require replacement, and approximately 1,330 will need to be reset.

Four (4) signal maintenance crews, two (2) signal construction crews, plus three (3) contractor crews that include numerous teams are currently working on repairing the damaged signals. FPL is working on restoring power. Repairs have been made to 410 downed stop signs and 15 stop signs and 675 additional other traffic signs still need repair by our crews. PWD sign repair crews continue to repair/replace signage at various locations throughout the County. An extensive effort to complete repairs is underway.

The street lighting system sustained damages with approximately 40 poles knocked down and approximately 80 luminaries missing. In the next 30 to 45 days it is expected that large quantities of luminaries will be damaged by the humidity seeping in through the casing as a result of high winds and heavy rains.

Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department (WASD) utilized its emergency generators to run all water and sewer treatment plants throughout the storm event, and there were no failures of these plants that provide treated drinking water and properly treat sewage. However, nearly 700 sewage pump stations were flooded by rainwater and/or had power failures. WASD mobilized 50 work crews, and was able to keep sewage overflows to only five (5) isolated known events.

As of today, August 30, approximately 54 pump stations remain without power. WASD crews are staffing these stations and manually pumping them to prevent overflows and backups. WASD is working closely with the Department of Health which is sampling area beaches to determine water quality.

Approximately 84 residents and businesses lost drinking water pressure due to uprooted trees ripping out small water lines. By Sunday morning, August 28, ten (10) WASD crews had repaired all but six (6) known water line breaks, and all other WASD customers were restored service. All six (6) lines are currently back in service.

To date, SWD has collected 9,396 tons of debris taken to landfills. Total tons since Friday, August 26 are three times the normal tonnage. Normal bulky waste collection is suspended. Twenty-two County trash crews and four (4) County contractors with a variety of resources are involved in this effort.

All SWD trash and recycling centers are open with extended hours of operation from 7 am to 7 pm. All landfills and transfer stations are open and operating as usual. The Permanent Home Chemical Collection Centers are open for residents and will continue normal operating hours.

The Resources Recovery Facility is not operational due to damage to the cooling towers but is expected to be back in operation by the end of the week. Household garbage collection is operational with expected disruption only on local streets that remain impassable due to fallen trees or flooding.

Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) provided evacuation transportation assistance to all visitors and residents. Currently, MDT's four (4) modes; Metrobus, Metrorail, Metromover and Paratransit services (STS and Medicaid) are fully operational and detailed below:

- *Metrobus:* On Thursday, August 25 at 7:15 pm Metrobus service was discontinued (last bus returned to garage) because of sustained tropical storm force winds of 39 mph. On a normal revenue service day, MDT Metrobus operates over 100 routes. On Friday, August 26 at 4:00 pm, MDT was operating only 40 routes due to excessive debris in the roadway. Currently all routes are operational.
- *Metrorail:* On Thursday, August 25 at 7:53 pm Metrorail service was discontinued (last car taken out of revenue service because of sustained tropical storm force winds of 39 mph. As of Friday, August 26, service was restored at approximately 1:15 pm Security guards are in place at all stations (posts).

A system wide inspection revealed that major tree damage at most stations; minor fence damage; major elevator/escalator circuitry damage at most stations; roof leakage at traction power/train control rooms; lighting circuitry damage; major flooding of pits/manholes.

- *Metromover:* On Thursday, August 25 at 6:58 pm (last car taken out of revenue service) Metromover service was discontinued because of sustained tropical storm force winds of 39 mph. As of Friday, August 26 at 11:00 am all stations on the Omni and Downtown loops were re-opened and normal service resumed. Brickell loop was re-opened at 3:45 pm on Friday after switch repair and sign removal/repair at the Financial District Station was completed. Security Officers (Wackenhut) are in place on all posts

A system wide inspection revealed major tree damage; major elevator/escalator circuitry damage; major flooding of pits/manholes; extensive signage damage (Financial District Station)

- *Paratransit Services (Special Transportation Service (STS) and Medicaid Transportation):* The Paratransit Operations' call center was operational until 6:00 pm on Thursday, August 25. After 6 pm, both the STS and Medicaid calls were answered directly by the service contractor.

In the case of STS, the service contractor continued to operate through the last pick up and drop off at 8:00 pm, August 25. The STS contractor resumed services at 8:30 am on Friday, August 26 for essential trips such as dialysis, anti-cancer, and work related trips. Service slowly increased throughout Saturday and Sunday based on requests for service.

In the case of Medicaid, the service contractor continued to operate through the last pick up and drop off at 7:45 pm, August 25. Service resumed on Friday, August 26 at 3:00 am for dialysis trips. Saturday and Sunday service was provided as scheduled with advance changes requested by medical facilities. Under normal circumstances, there are no service requests for Medicaid service on Sundays.

MDT has made provisions for transportation for the visit of the Secretary of Agriculture, Charles Bronson and Senator Nan Rich, along with its delegation, to tour and assess agricultural areas affected by the hurricane. The tour is taking place today, August 30 beginning at the Dade County Farm Bureau in Homestead.

Miami-Dade Park and Recreation cleared and readied 237 park sites for re-opening. Only seven (7) sites remain closed due to lack of power, flooding or extreme tree damage. All campgrounds with the exception of Greynolds will be open to the public. All marinas will be open to the public with the exception of Matheson Marina, which will remain open to marina rental patrons only, due to loss of power. Golf courses are open, with the exception of Greynolds due to loss of power. Miami Metrozoo has experienced some structural damage and flooding and will remain closed until further notice. Vizcaya Museum and Gardens has also experienced downed trees, destroyed vegetation and facility damage, but is open to the public.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

The Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD), in addition to responding to calls, has provided traffic control at County intersections as necessary and appropriate. In addition, MDPD assisted with traffic control and security in support of the logistical operations of FPL and other recovery efforts.

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (MDFR) has operated at double the call volume and continues to respond to numerous calls. MDFR also assisted many of your offices and other municipalities with the coordination, delivery and distribution of ice and water to numerous sites and directly to neighborhoods more severely impacted.

The Department of Environmental Resource Management (DERM) staff was dispatched to the neighborhoods immediately after the storm to survey damage to local areas due to flooding. DERM identified a number of neighborhoods suffering from severe flooding and took the necessary steps to alleviate and eliminate the problems experienced by County residents. DERM staff also inspected all major industrial and commercial facilities throughout the entire County and found no environmental problems.

### **HUMAN SERVICES**

During this activation, Hurricane Evacuation Centers (HECs) at Charles R. Drew Middle School and Robert Morgan Senior High School, and the Pet Hurricane Evacuation Center (PHEC) at the Sunshine Pavilion, were opened. Post storm, the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army opened over a dozen feeding sites throughout the County. Point of Distribution centers (PODs) for ice and water were established at Metro Zoo, Amelia Earhart Park, and Dolphin Mall and have now closed. Additionally, various public safety agencies particularly MDFR canvassed affected communities providing mobile water and ice distribution. The PODs and mobile distribution ceased operations on Monday, August 29.

County employees, through the Disaster Assistance Employees (DAE) program, were deployed to the evacuation centers and the distribution points and have provided assistance. Over 400 County employees from Transit, DERM, Team Metro, MDPD, MDFR, the Office of Strategic Business Management, Planning and Zoning, Elections, Public Works, Solid Waste, Community Action Agency

and the County Manager's Office, were dispatched to assist with management of the evacuation centers and the distribution of ice and water at distribution sites. As the National Guard reallocated its resources to the Gulf Coast, County staff continued to play a vital role in the operation of the distribution points until closure. On-site state emergency management officials praised efforts of County volunteers.

Miami-Dade County is opening two (2) Disaster Assistance Centers (DAC) today at 2:00 pm at the Caleb Center and the South Dade Government Center for hurricane victims. Residents with damaged homes or other problems can get information and referrals to government and private non-profit agencies. Team Metro serves as the lead agency at the DACs and County employees, through the DAE program, are being deployed to assist.

### **OTHER COUNTY OPERATIONS & FACILITIES**

*Miami International Airport (MIA)* - MIA reopened at 8:34 am on Friday morning August 26 after closing overnight to Hurricane Katrina. Operations gradually returned as airlines experienced problems in getting crews to return to work. Passengers were stranded in the terminal (over 660 overnight on Saturday night and only about 150 Sunday night). MIA has returned to normal schedules. The terminal sustained major roof leaks (especially in the F-G Wrap Area and Concourse H). These leaks are being repaired. The terminal also experienced damage to passenger loading bridges. All have now been repaired except for six (6) which are waiting for parts. The Commercial Jet hangar on the north side sustained major roof damage and is being assessed.

*Opa-locka Airport (OPF)* - At OPF Building 45 lost its aluminum roof. There was minor security fence damage but it has been repaired. A few aircraft were damaged. The airport is fully operational.

*Kendall-Tamiami Airport (TMB)* - 27 airplanes were damaged at TMB. The airport is operating but there is damage to several roofs of businesses.

*Homestead General Airport (X51)* - X51 was the hardest hit GA airport. Initially it was flooded and did not have electricity or drinking water. As the water receded, one (1) runway was opened on Sunday night. The airport still does not have electricity but FPL crews are present. The airport remains on generators and has restored communications.

The Dante B. Fascell Port of Miami-Dade County was closed to vessel traffic by the U. S. Coast Guard at 8:00 am on Thursday morning, August 25. Landside traffic was closed at approximately 11:00 am. The Port subsequently opened for business at 7:00 am on Saturday morning, August 27. At that time the Port accommodated cruise vessels for both Friday and Saturday as well as cargo traffic. As of Monday, August 29, the Port continues to be open for normal operations.

While Port facilities are operational, the Port did sustain an estimated \$1million in damages, predominantly from roof damage. Repairs as a result of significant roof damage to buildings at 1050, 1005 and 1015 Port Boulevard as well as cruise terminals 3, 4, 5 and 8. Additional damage has been identified for various canopies, windows and curtain wall glass.

At this time the Port is initiating a damage survey done by Port bond engineers to ensure that all hurricane related damages are identified and properly recorded.

All County buildings have been surveyed and damage is minimal, predominantly water damage. All buildings and fleet maintained and operated by General Services Administration (GSA) are fully functional. GSA will continue in its role in support of the entire recovery effort by providing all of their services; fuel, printing, maintenance and renovation assistance and support crews and staff where necessary. One example includes thousands of informational flyers that were printed over the weekend

in coordination with our Communications Department in an effort to provide those without power with basic hurricane recovery related information.

Most library facilities are open. Several branches remain closed due to lack of power or water damage and are expected to re-open tomorrow, Wednesday, August 31, with the exception of Coral Gables and Little River. West Flagler will remain closed due to on-going renovations. Regular Bookmobile service is being provided, unless road debris does not allow access.

The Department of Procurement Management (DPM) has assisted in supplying various agencies and County departments with the necessary goods and services needed for all recovery efforts. Together with GSA, DPM is carefully monitoring the needs of our departments as it relates to our fuel supply and natural gas and will explore all options in an effort to avert any potential issues caused by the continued path of Hurricane Katrina.

I will be conducting a debriefing session with appropriate staff members regarding our operations during this event. I look forward to sharing this information with you as we continually assess our preparedness and response plans and efforts. I want to again thank you for your leadership and support. I know that you join me in commending the efforts of the thousands of County employees who are working around the clock to assist in the restoration of all County services. I am particularly grateful to our executive team, my office and all of our department management staff for their selfless dedication during these last five days. I am proud of our entire County team which did an exceptional job responding in an aggressive manner after Katrina left our County. Our thoughts and prayers are, of course, with the people of the Gulf Coast impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

C: Murray Greenberg, County Attorney  
Assistant County Managers  
Assistants to the County Manager  
Department Directors